GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:36
ANSWERED ON:26.04.2016
Environmental Clearances
Meghwal Shri Arjun Ram

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has made use of space/satelite technology to simplify the environmental clearance process and issuance of speedier clearance;
(b) if so, the extent to which the said technology is being used along with the benefits accrued thereunder;
(c) whether the Government proposes to adopt the said technology in respect of clearances of pending railway projects; and
(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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STATEMENT IN REPLY TO PARTS (a), (b), (c) AND (d), OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 36 FOR ORAL ANSWER ON 26.04.2016 REGARDING ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCES ASKED BY SHRI ARJUN MEGHWAL:

(a) and (b) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has mandated online submission of application for Terms of Reference (TOR) and Environment Clearance (EC) from 4th July, 2014 in the Ministry and from 2nd July, 2015 in the State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAAs) with a view to bring more transparency in the system and expediting decision making. The proposals for grant of Environmental Clearance are considered as per the provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006 which inter-alia provides timelines for each stage of Environment Clearance process. The use of space/satellite technology in the Environment Clearance Process has not been introduced as yet. However, with regard to forest clearance Ministry had launched first version of a Geographical Information System (GIS) based Decision Support System (DSS) to facilitate objective and informed and predictable decisions on applications seeking prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for approval of use of forest land for non-forest purpose on 11th November, 2014.

The DSS developed by the Forest Survey of India contains geo-referenced layers of Forest Cover as per the latest State of Forest Report prepared by the Forest Survey of India, Forest Types, Biological Richness, Landscape Integrity, Protected Areas, Tiger Reserves, Tiger Corridor and 1 Km x 1 Km India grid. The projects of railways along with the projects of other user agencies are appraised by the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) using the DSS.

(c) As per EIA Notification, 2006, Railway projects do not attract the provisions of the said Notification, therefore, do not require prior environment clearance.

(d) Does not arise.

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